A/68/21

United Nations

Report of the Committee on Information

Thirty-fifth session (22 April-2 May 2013)

General Assembly

Official Records
Sixty-eighth Session
Supplement No. 21

Please recycle

General Assembly
Official Records
Sixty-eighth Session
Supplement No. 21

A/68/21

Report of the Committee on Information

Thirty-fifth session
(22 April-2 May 2013)

United Nations • New York, 2013

[17 May 2013]

Contents

Chapter		*Page*
I.	Introduction	1
II.	Organizational questions	4
	A. Opening of the session	4
	B. Election of officers	4
	C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work	4
	D. Observers	5
III.	General debate	6
IV.	Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session	10

Chapter I
Introduction

1. In its resolution 34/182, the General Assembly decided to maintain the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, established by its resolution 33/115 C, which would be known as the Committee on Information, and to increase its membership from 41 to 66. In section I, paragraph 2, of resolution 34/182, the Assembly requested the Committee:

(a) To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;

(b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications;

(c) To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly.

The Assembly also requested the Committee and the Secretary-General to report to it at its thirty-fifth session.

2. The General Assembly, from its thirty-sixth to sixty-sixth sessions, took note of the reports of the Committee and adopted consensus resolutions. At its sixty-seventh session, the Assembly took note of the report of the Committee and adopted consensus resolutions 67/124 A and B.

3. Currently, the Committee is composed of the following Member States:

Algeria	Benin
Angola	Brazil
Antigua and Barbuda	Bulgaria
Argentina	Burkina Faso
Armenia	Burundi
Austria	Cape Verde
Azerbaijan	Chile
Bangladesh	China
Belarus	Colombia
Belgium	Congo
Belize	Costa Rica

Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Lebanon
Liberia
Libya
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malta
Mexico
Monaco
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Nepal
Netherlands
Niger
Nigeria
Oman
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Republic of Moldova

Romania

Russian Federation

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saudi Arabia

Senegal

Sierra Leone

Singapore

Slovakia

Solomon Islands

Somalia

South Africa

Spain

Sri Lanka

Sudan

Suriname

Switzerland

Syrian Arab Republic

Thailand

Togo

Trinidad and Tobago

Tunisia

Turkey

Ukraine

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

United Republic of Tanzania

United States of America

Uruguay

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Viet Nam

Yemen

Zambia

Zimbabwe

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0255-190X

Chapter II
Organizational questions

A. Opening of the session

4. The organizational meeting of the thirty-fifth session of the Committee on Information was held on 22 April 2013 at United Nations Headquarters. The session was opened by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Chibaula D. Silwamba (Zambia).

B. Election of officers

5. In accordance with the principle of geographical rotation, the Committee held elections for a new Bureau for a two-year term. Upon her nomination by the representative of the Group of Asia and Pacific States, Lyutha Al-Mughairy (Oman) was elected Chair by acclamation. Upon their nomination by the representatives of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Group of Eastern European States and the Group of Western European and Other States, respectively, Gabriel Orellana Zabalza (Guatemala), Yegor Pyvovarov (Ukraine) and Juan Manuel Gonzalez de Linares (Spain) were elected Vice-Chair by acclamation. Upon his nomination by a representative of the Group of African States, Chibaula D. Silwamba (Zambia) was elected Rapporteur, also by acclamation. The officers of the Committee on Information for the period 2013-2014 are as follows:

Chair:

Lyutha Al-Mughairy (Oman)

Vice-Chairs:

Gabriel Orellana Zabalza (Guatemala)
Yegor Pyvovarov (Ukraine)
Juan Manuel Gonzalez de Linares (Spain)

Rapporteur:

Chibaula D. Silwamba (Zambia)

C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

6. At its organizational meeting, on 22 April, the Committee adopted the following agenda and programme of work (A/AC.198/2013/1):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
4. Admission of new members.
5. Statement by the Chair.
6. Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information.
7. General debate.

8. Consideration of reports submitted by the Secretary-General.

9. Open-ended working group of the Committee on Information.

10. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.

7. The Committee held its general debate on 22 and 23 April 2013. On 22 April, in the afternoon, the Department of Public Information, led by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, held an interactive dialogue with Member States.

8. For its consideration of agenda item 7, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services (A/AC.198/2013/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: news services (A/AC.198/2013/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: outreach services (A/AC 198/2013/4).

D. Observers

9. Fiji took part in the session as an observer. The Holy See, the State of Palestine, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization also participated in the session as observers.

Chapter III
General debate

10. Statements in the general debate were made by the following Member States: Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba (in its national capacity and, separately, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States), Egypt, Fiji (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Guatemala, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Senegal, South Africa, Ukraine, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zambia. A representative of the European Union addressed the Committee on behalf of the members and associate members of the Union. The International Organization of la Francophonie, the State of Palestine and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization addressed the meeting in their capacity as observers.

11. The general debate was preceded by statements by the outgoing Chair of the Committee and the newly elected Chair. The Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information also made a statement and responded to questions and comments by Member States at the conclusion of the general debate.

12. In taking up the substantive questions before the Committee, speakers emphasized the central role of the United Nations in global affairs and of the Department of Public Information as its public voice. One speaker, addressing the Committee on behalf of a large group, said that that group supported the Department in promoting and advancing the work of the Organization through its campaigns on issues of importance to the international community, including the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals and other issues on the United Nations agenda. The speaker expressed support for the Department's special information programme on the question of Palestine and the role and work of the network of United Nations information centres.

13. Another speaker, saying that the voice of the United Nations must be heard clearly by all, stressed that the Department's efforts would help to broaden global support for the United Nations and enhance the latter's credibility. Another speaker encouraged the Department to continue communications strategies that addressed issues concerning peace, security, human rights and development. The greater exchange of information between the Secretariat and other United Nations entities, in addition to civil society, contributed greatly to implementing those key United Nations priorities, he added. In that context, a number of speakers argued in favour of closer collaboration between the Department and the Committee. One suggested that the Committee should catalyse knowledge to adequately inform the public and to stimulate lively discourse and social debate.

14. Many speakers welcomed the Department's growing use of new information and communications technologies. One speaker, representing a large group, said that new information technologies had created many new possibilities for human communication. Agreeing on the need to capitalize on such opportunities, he said that expanding the use of mobile and Internet platforms promoted the messages and activities of the United Nations in real time. He cautioned, however, that, while developing web platforms was useful, the increasing digital gap between developed and developing countries remained a matter of concern. In most developing countries, traditional media, such as radio, television and the written press,

remained a major source of information. Accordingly, efforts must be made to strengthen traditional media. Another speaker advocated encouraging access to information through traditional media in as many languages as possible, along with the introduction of new technologies in developing countries. Another, while acknowledging the value of developing new technologies, noted that the digital divide between developed and developing countries was too wide. Owing to the lack of access by many countries to new technologies, traditional media, such as United Nations Television and United Nations Radio, must be maintained.

15. Several speakers stressed their support for the promotion of freedom of the press. One speaker, representing a large group, recalled that too many journalists worldwide continued to be censored, jailed, kidnapped or killed. Citing data from the Committee to Protect Journalists, she said that 979 journalists had been killed since 1992, including 14 in 2012 alone, and that the international community must continue to work together to end such tragic human rights violations.

16. One speaker observed that it was regrettable that certain developed countries, by taking advantage of their monopoly over modern communications technology, were continuously seeking to distort facts and news and engineer events and developments, especially those relating to developing countries. He said that certain Western[1] countries had imposed a ban on the broadcast of more than 20 satellite television and radio channels of his country. Another speaker also denounced what she described as flagrant aggression in the form of illegal radio and television broadcasts to her country.

17. The issue of multilingualism in the work of the Department was stressed by most speakers. One speaker, speaking on behalf of a large group, said that multilingualism was at the core of global communications but was also, for the United Nations, a matter of accountability, transparency and ownership. She stressed in this regard that available resources should be allocated so that multilingualism is not regarded as a constant plea for additional resources. Another speaker said that linguistic diversity was a universal value and that he had high expectations for the implementation of multilingualism at the United Nations. Agreeing that it was important to promote multilingualism, one speaker voiced support for innovative technology, social media tools and partnerships with civil society, businesses and other relevant groups to produce and distribute information in an environment-friendly, cost-neutral way. Another speaker, proposing ways to improve the Department's work, pointed first to the need to develop the level of services in all working languages in a balanced manner.

18. Several speakers voiced their disappointment at the slow progress in achieving linguistic parity in the work of the Department, especially on its website. A number of speakers returned to the issue of having the Department's press releases available in the six official languages of the United Nations. One speaker, representing a large group, welcomed the Department's pilot initiative to issue press releases in Spanish for the session of the Commission on Population and Development currently under way. She reiterated her group's suggestion, however, that a strategy be designed and implemented to provide press releases in all official languages in order to achieve full parity, at least with regard to website content. Another speaker, voicing his

[1] France, speaking on behalf of the European Union, asked that the word "Western" be deleted from the present report. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran argued in favour of retaining it.

disappointment at the lack of parity among the official languages of the Organization, proposed that the current unfair situation could be overcome by sharing the limited financial resources through a rotating scheme of languages. Such a scheme should be determined on the basis of the statistics held by the Department and those contained in the reports of the Secretary-General.

19. Another speaker, while commending the Department for its pilot project to issue press releases in Spanish, called it a first step to making them available in all official languages. He called for the prompt implementation of the mandate within existing resources, beginning with the publication of press releases in all the official languages at regular intervals and during predetermined time frames. During the initial stage, languages could be rotated. Alternatively, he suggested, the editorial criteria, length and frequency of press releases could be modified to make room for new teams to write press releases in the other official languages. Another speaker, noting that press releases were sometimes excessively long and contained extensive background information, argued that modifying their structure would enable their issuance in other languages.

20. The role and work of the network of United Nations information centres was addressed by most speakers. Speaking on behalf of a group, one speaker recalled that the group attached great importance to that role and work, stressing that any decision pertaining to reorganizing the centres must be made in close consultation with the host countries and take into account the geographical, linguistic and technological characteristics and needs of different regions. The group welcomed the offer by some developing countries to host information centres at rent-free premises, while noting that such support was no substitute for the full allocation of financial resources. She also reiterated her group's support for taking the measures necessary to establish an information centre in Luanda to serve the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries.

21. Another speaker, also representing a large group, expressed her satisfaction at the growing use of social media by the information centres. Referring to statistics that revealed that the 63 centres received 10 million online visitors in 2012, thanks to the availability of information in local languages and the six official languages of the United Nations, she said that such figures only underscored the very real impact that the Department's message could have on longer-term campaigns, such as human rights and climate change, in addition to such hotspot issues as the crises in Mali and the Syrian Arab Republic.

22. The Department's special information programme on the question of Palestine was discussed by several speakers. One encouraged the Department to continue its efforts to inform the world about the harsh plight of Palestinians living under occupation and to reveal the violations against them. Another expressed support for the Department's partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees towards a just, comprehensive peace in the Middle East. A third expressed the hope that the special information programme would receive sufficient funding and staff to fully implement its mandate.

23. Several speakers lauded the Department for its outreach activities, in particular its work with civil society and academic institutions. One commended the Department's creativity and thoughtfulness in commemorating the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Another commended the Department for its observance of World Autism Awareness

Day and the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. The Department's United Nations Academic Impact initiative, which provides a platform for schools of higher learning and research to work with the United Nations and with one another on common goals and objectives, was also positively singled out by several speakers. The appointment by the Secretary-General of an envoy for youth was also welcomed by several speakers. One speaker, addressing the Committee on behalf of a large group, encouraged the Department to broaden its cooperation arrangements with academic institutions and volunteers to increase the amount of multilingual web content in a cost-neutral manner.

24. While the speakers expressed appreciation for the wide range of activities carried out by the Department, they recognized the growing challenges that it faced. One proposed a three-step approach to handling such challenges: first, all States should be up to date in making contributions; second, expectations and mandates should be realistic; and third, reform and partnerships must be implemented efficiently.

25. In his closing remarks, the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information assured Member States of continued partnership with them through the Committee and its Bureau, seeking their guidance on the way forward.

Chapter IV

Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session

26. At its 4th plenary meeting, the Committee on Information proceeded to adopt its draft report, including two draft resolutions, by consensus. A text submitted by the Group of 77 and China formed the basis for negotiation of the draft resolutions, which involved two negotiating groups, the Group of 77 and China and the European Union, as well as other Member States.

Questions relating to information

Draft resolution A
Information in the service of humanity

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the comprehensive and important report of the Committee on Information,[1]

Taking note also of the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information,[2]

Urges all countries, organizations of the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and the consequences of every kind arising from those disparities that affect the capability of the public, private or other media and individuals in developing countries to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production, as well as to ensure the diversity of sources and their free access to information, and recognizing the call in this context for what in the United Nations and at various international forums has been termed "a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process":

(a) To cooperate and interact with a view to reducing existing disparities in information flows at all levels by increasing assistance for the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with due regard for their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by those countries, and in order to enable them and the public, private or other media in developing countries to develop their own information and communications policies freely and independently and increase the participation of media and individuals in the communication process, and to ensure a free flow of information at all levels;

(b) To ensure for journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and condemn resolutely all attacks against them;

---

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/68/21).

[2] A/68/__.

(c) To provide support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from public, private and other media in developing countries;

(d) To enhance regional efforts and cooperation among developing countries, as well as cooperation between developed and developing countries, to strengthen communications capacities and to improve the media infrastructure and communications technology in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information;

(e) To aim at, in addition to bilateral cooperation, providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries and their media, public, private or other, with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including:

(i) The development of the human and technical resources that are indispensable for the improvement of information and communications systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(ii) The creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media, public, private or other, to have, by using their national and regional resources, the communications technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(iii) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at the subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries;

(iv) The facilitation, as appropriate, of access by the developing countries to advanced communications technology available on the open market;

(f) To provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which should support both public and private media.

Draft resolution B
United Nations public information policies and activities

The General Assembly,

Emphasizing that the Committee on Information is its main subsidiary body mandated to make recommendations to it relating to the work of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat,

Reaffirming its resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, in which it established the Department of Public Information, with a view to promoting to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world, and all other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly related to the activities of the Department,

Emphasizing that the contents of public information and communications should be placed at the heart of the strategic management of the United Nations and that a culture of communications and transparency should permeate all levels of the Organization as a means of fully informing the peoples of the world of the aims and activities of the United Nations, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to create broad-based global support for the United Nations,

Stressing that the primary mission of the Department of Public Information is to provide, through its outreach activities, accurate, impartial, comprehensive, balanced, timely and relevant information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization with the greatest transparency,

Recalling its resolution 65/107 B of 10 December 2010, which provided an opportunity to take due steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department of Public Information and to maximize the use of its resources,

Expressing its concern that the gap in information and communications technology between the developed and the developing countries has continued to widen and that vast segments of the population in developing countries are not benefiting from the information and communications technologies that are currently available, and, in this regard, underlining the necessity of rectifying the imbalances in the present development of information and communications technologies in order to make it more just, equitable and effective,

Recognizing that developments in information and communications technologies open vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development and can play an important role in the eradication of poverty in developing countries, and, at the same time, emphasizing that the development of these technologies poses challenges and risks and could lead to the further widening of disparities between and within countries,

Recalling its resolution 65/311 of 19 July 2011 on multilingualism, and emphasizing the importance of making appropriate use of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the use of the five other official languages, as well as the importance of ensuring the full and equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department,

I
Introduction

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in respect of the public information policies and activities of the United Nations, to continue to implement fully the recommendations contained in relevant resolutions;

2. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations remains the indispensable foundation of a peaceful and just world and that its voice must be heard in a clear and effective manner, and emphasizes the essential role of the Department of Public Information in this context;

3. *Stresses* the importance of the provision of clear, timely, accurate and comprehensive information by the Secretariat to Member States, upon their request, within the framework of existing mandates and procedures;

4. *Reaffirms* the central role of the Committee on Information in United Nations public information policies and activities, including the prioritization of those activities, and decides that recommendations relating to the programme of the Department of Public Information shall originate, to the extent possible, in the Committee and shall be considered by the Committee;

5. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, following the priorities laid down by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/244 of 24 December 2010, and recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration[3] and the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[4] to pay particular attention to peace and security, development and human rights and to major issues such as the eradication of poverty, including the global food crisis, conflict prevention, sustainable development, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and the needs of the African continent;

6. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to pay particular attention to progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the outcomes of the major related United Nations summits and conferences in carrying out its activities, and calls upon the Department to play an active role in raising public awareness of the world financial and economic crisis and its impact on development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and of the global challenge of climate change, in particular the actions taken in accordance with the objective, principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[5] especially in the context of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, particularly in the context of the Conference of the Parties and of the Meetings of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;[6]

II
General activities of the Department of Public Information

7. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information;[7]

8. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to maintain its commitment to a culture of evaluation and to continue to evaluate its products and activities with the objective of enhancing their effectiveness, and to continue to cooperate and coordinate with Member States and the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat;

9. *Reaffirms* the importance of more effective coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Spokesperson for the

[3] Resolution 55/2.
[4] Resolution 60/1.
[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.
[6] Ibid., vol. 2303, No. 30822.
[7] A/AC.198/2013/2-4.

Secretary-General, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure consistency in the messages of the Organization;

10. *Notes* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly, and requests the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship with the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

11. *Encourages* continued collaboration between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the promotion of culture and in the fields of education and communication, bridging the existing gap between the developed and the developing countries;

12. *Notes* with appreciation the efforts of the Department of Public Information to work at the local level with other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to enhance the coordination of their communications activities, urges the Department to encourage the United Nations Communications Group to promote linguistic diversity in its work, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session on progress achieved in this regard;

13. *Reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information must prioritize its work programme, while respecting existing mandates and in line with regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[8] to focus its message and better concentrate its efforts and to match its programmes with the needs of its target audiences, on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to exert all efforts to ensure that publications and other information services of the Secretariat, including the United Nations website and the United Nations News Service, contain comprehensive, balanced, objective and equitable information in all official languages about the issues before the Organization and that they maintain editorial independence, impartiality, accuracy and full consistency with resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly;

15. *Underlines* the critical need to address violations of the relevant international rules and regulations that govern the area of broadcasting, including television, radio and satellite broadcasting, in the most appropriate manner;

16. *Reiterates* its request to the Department of Public Information and content-providing offices of the Secretariat to ensure that United Nations publications are produced in all official languages, as well as in an environmentally friendly and cost-neutral manner, and to continue to coordinate closely with all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat and funds and programmes of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, in order to avoid duplication in the issuance of United Nations publications;

17. *Encourages*, in this regard, the Department of Public Information and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the Secretariat to

[8] ST/SGB/2000/8.

consult on opportunities for merging their publishing activities and to develop new collaborative arrangements to enhance multilingualism in other outputs in a cost-neutral manner, bearing in mind the importance of ensuring the full and equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session;

18. *Emphasizes* that the Department of Public Information should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of special interest to developing countries and, where appropriate, other countries with special needs, and that the activities of the Department should contribute to bridging the existing gap between the developing and the developed countries in the crucial field of public information and communications;

19. *Reiterates its concern* that the issuance of daily press releases has not been expanded to all official languages, as requested in previous resolutions and in full respect of the principle of parity of all six official languages, and reiterates its request to the Department of Public Information to design a strategy, in close collaboration with other departments, to deliver daily press releases in all six official languages through creative schemes, in a cost-neutral manner and in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session;

Multilingualism and public information

20. *Underlines* the responsibility of the Secretariat in mainstreaming multilingualism into all its communication and information activities, within existing resources and on an equitable basis;

21. *Emphasizes* the importance of ensuring equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, whether based on traditional or new media, including in presentations to the Committee on Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages;

22. *Reiterates* its request to the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department of Public Information has appropriate staffing capacity in all the official languages of the United Nations to undertake all its activities and to include this aspect in future programme budget proposals for the Department, bearing in mind the principle of parity of all six official languages, while respecting the workload in each official language;

23. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to enhance multilingualism in all its activities, stresses the importance of ensuring that the texts of all new public United Nations documents in all six official languages, information materials and all older United Nations documents are made available through the United Nations website and are accessible to Member States without delay, and further stresses the importance of fully implementing its resolution 65/311;

Bridging the digital divide

24. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to contribute to raising the awareness of the international community of the importance of the implementation of the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information

Society[9] and of the possibilities that the use of the Internet and other information and communications technologies can bring to societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide, including by commemorating World Information Society Day on 17 May;

Network of United Nations information centres

25. *Emphasizes* the importance of the network of United Nations information centres in enhancing the public image of the United Nations, in disseminating messages on the United Nations to local populations, especially in developing countries, bearing in mind that information in local languages has the strongest impact on local populations, and in mobilizing support for the work of the United Nations at the local level;

26. *Welcomes* the work done by the network of United Nations information centres in favour of the publication of United Nations information materials and the translation of important documents into languages other than the official languages of the United Nations, encourages the network of information centres to continue to develop web pages in local languages and the Department of Public Information to provide necessary resources and technical facilities, with a view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all the corners of the world, in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization, and encourages the continuation of efforts in this regard;

27. *Stresses* the importance of rationalizing the network of United Nations information centres, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to continue to make proposals in this direction, including through the redeployment of resources where necessary, and to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

28. *Reaffirms* that the rationalization of United Nations information centres must be carried out on a case-by-case basis in consultation with all concerned Member States in which existing information centres are located, the countries served by those information centres and other interested countries in the region, taking into consideration the distinctive characteristics of each region;

29. *Recognizes* that the network of United Nations information centres, especially in developing countries, should continue to enhance its impact and activities, including through strategic communications support, and calls upon the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of this approach to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

30. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, through the United Nations information centres, to strengthen its cooperation with all other United Nations entities at the country level and in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, in order to enhance coherence in communications and to avoid duplication of work;

31. *Stresses* the importance of taking into account the special needs and requirements of developing countries in the field of information and communications technology for the effective flow of information in those countries;

[9] A/C.2/59/3, annex, and A/60/687.

32. *Also stresses* the importance of efforts to strengthen the outreach activities of the United Nations to those Member States remaining outside the network of United Nations information centres, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to extend the services of the network of information centres to those Member States;

33. *Further stresses* that the Department of Public Information should continue to review the allocation of both staff and financial resources to the United Nations information centres in developing countries, taking into account the specific needs of the least developed countries;

34. *Welcomes* the support of some Member States, including developing countries, in offering, inter alia, rent-free premises for the United Nations information centres because of lack of funding, bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the information centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations;

35. *Notes* the strengthening of the United Nations information centres in Cairo, Mexico City and Pretoria, and encourages the Secretary-General to explore the strengthening of other centres, especially in Africa, in cooperation with the Member States concerned and in a cost-neutral manner;

36. *Welcomes* General Assembly resolution 64/243 of 24 December 2009, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations information centre in Luanda as a contribution towards addressing the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries, reiterates its request to the Secretary-General, in coordination with the Government of Angola, to take the measures necessary for the prompt establishment of the information centre, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session on the progress made in this regard;

III
Strategic communications services

37. *Reaffirms* the role of the strategic communications services in devising and disseminating United Nations messages by developing communications strategies, in close collaboration with the substantive departments, United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, in full compliance with their legislative mandates;

Promotional campaigns

38. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Department of Public Information in promoting, through its campaigns, issues of importance to the international community, such as the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the progress made in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, United Nations reform, the eradication of poverty, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, sustainable development, disarmament, decolonization, human rights, including the rights of women and children, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, strategic coordination in humanitarian relief, especially in natural disasters and other crises, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, non-communicable diseases and other diseases, the needs of the African continent, the nature of the critical economic and social situation in Africa and the priorities of the New

Partnership for Africa's Development,[10] the special needs of the least developed countries, the establishment of the permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, dialogue among civilizations, the culture of peace and tolerance and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, as well as prevention of genocide, and requests the Department, in cooperation with the countries concerned and with the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to take appropriate measures to enhance world public awareness of all these issues;

39. *Requests* the Secretariat, especially the Department of Public Information, to contribute to the observance of International Mother Language Day on 21 February, as proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on 25 March, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 62/122 of 17 December 2007, Nelson Mandela International Day on 18 July, in accordance with Assembly resolution 64/13 of 10 November 2009, and the International Day of Nowruz on 21 March, in accordance with Assembly resolution 64/253 of 23 February 2010, and to play a role in raising awareness and promoting these events in a cost-neutral manner, where appropriate;

40. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to widely disseminate the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012,[11] and follow-up thereto;

41. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to raise awareness of all General Assembly-mandated high-level meetings, including the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities, to be held on 23 September 2013, and the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, to be held on 26 September 2013;

42. *Further requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to raise awareness of and disseminate information, in a cost-neutral manner, on the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, declared by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/119 of 10 December 2010;

43. *Encourages* the Department of Public Information to develop partnerships with the private sector in a cost-neutral manner, and in this regard takes note of the partnership with airlines that provide to their customers in-flight programmes featuring United Nations activities;

Role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding

44. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to ensure the involvement of the Department of Public Information from the planning stage of future peacekeeping

[10] A/57/304, annex.

[11] Resolution 66/288, annex.

operations through interdepartmental consultations and coordination with other departments of the Secretariat, in particular with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support;

45. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support to continue their cooperation in raising awareness of the new realities, far-reaching successes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations, especially multidimensional and complex ones, and the recent surge in United Nations peacekeeping activities, and welcomes efforts by the three Departments to develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy on current challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping;

46. *Stresses* the importance of enhancing the public information capacity of the Department of Public Information in the field of peacekeeping operations and its role, in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, in the process of selecting public information staff for United Nations peacekeeping operations or missions and, in this regard, invites the Department of Public Information to second public information staff who have the skills necessary to fulfil the tasks of the operations or missions, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution in accordance with Chapter XV, Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and to consider views expressed, especially by host countries, when appropriate, in this regard;

47. *Emphasizes* the importance of the peacekeeping gateway on the United Nations website, and requests the Department of Public Information to continue its efforts in supporting the peacekeeping missions to further develop their websites;

48. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue to cooperate in implementing an effective outreach programme to explain the zero-tolerance policy of the Organization regarding sexual exploitation and abuse and to inform the public of the outcome of all such cases involving peacekeeping personnel, including cases where allegations are ultimately found to be legally unproven, and also to inform the public of the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel;[12]

49. *Notes* the importance of communication and information activities relating to peacebuilding efforts, in particular those of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office of the Secretariat and the Peacebuilding Fund, and requests the Department of Public Information to cooperate with these entities in that regard, with a view to widening outreach of their important work;

Role of the Department of Public Information in strengthening dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace as means of enhancing understanding among nations

50. *Recalls* its resolutions on dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace,[13] and requests the Department of Public Information, while ensuring the

[12] Resolution 62/214, annex.

[13] Resolutions 52/15, 53/22, 53/25, 55/23, 56/6, 59/142 and 60/4.

pertinence and relevance of subjects for promotional campaigns on this issue, to continue to provide the support necessary for the dissemination of information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, as well as the initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations, and to take due steps in fostering the culture of dialogue among civilizations and promoting cultural understanding, tolerance, respect for and freedom of religion or belief and effective enjoyment by all of all human rights and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development;

51. *Invites* the United Nations system, especially the Department of Public Information, to continue to encourage and facilitate dialogue among civilizations and to formulate ways and means to promote dialogue among civilizations in the activities of the United Nations in various fields, taking into account the Programme of Action of the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations,[14] and in this regard reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to present to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session the report requested by the Assembly in its resolution 60/4 of 20 October 2005;

52. *Acknowledges* the achievements of the Alliance of Civilizations and the efforts made by the High Representative of the Secretary-General for the Alliance of Civilizations, which it had welcomed in its resolution 64/14 of 10 November 2009, notes the broad range of initiatives and partnerships in the areas of youth, education, the media and migration launched at the fourth Alliance of Civilizations Forum, held in Doha from 11 to 13 December 2011, and continued at the fifth Alliance of Civilizations Forum, held in Vienna on 27 and 28 February 2013, and welcomes the continuing support of the Department of Public Information for the work of the Alliance of Civilizations, including its ongoing projects;

IV
News services

53. *Stresses* that the central objective of the news services implemented by the Department of Public Information is the timely delivery of accurate, objective and balanced news and information emanating from the United Nations system in all four mass media, namely, print, radio, television and the Internet, to the media and other audiences worldwide, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism, and reiterates its request to the Department to ensure that all breaking news stories and news alerts are accurate, impartial and free of bias;

54. *Recognizes* the important role of television and video services provided by the Department of Public Information, and notes the recent efforts in making available online broadcast-quality video that can be streamed or downloaded by smaller broadcast outlets that do not have access to satellite feeds;

55. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take full advantage of new developments in information technology in order to improve the expeditious dissemination of information on the United Nations in a cost-neutral manner, in accordance with the priorities established by the General Assembly in its resolutions and taking into account the linguistic diversity of the Organization, in this regard recognizes the e-mail news alert service, and encourages the Department of Public Information to consult with the Office of Information and Communications

[14] Resolution 56/6, sect. B.

Technology in order to use, as a matter of priority, innovative ways to disseminate information daily in all six official languages on an equitable basis;

Traditional means of communication

56. *Welcomes* the sustained efforts of United Nations Radio, which remains one of the most effective and far-reaching traditional media available to the Department of Public Information and an important instrument in United Nations activities, to enhance the timeliness, presentation and thematic focus of its multilingual programmes on United Nations activities and to ensure the widest possible dissemination of its programming to media outlets using the most suitable platforms and formats, pre-recorded or live, requests the Secretary-General to continue to make every effort to achieve parity in the six official languages in United Nations Radio productions, reiterates the important role of the 15-minute daily programmes created pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/82 B of 6 December 1999, and requests the Department to continue the production and dissemination of the programmes, in accordance with client needs;

57. *Also welcomes* resolution 67/124 B of 18 December 2012, in which the General Assembly endorsed the proclamation of 13 February as World Radio Day;

58. *Further welcomes* the ongoing efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to disseminate programmes directly to broadcasting stations all over the world in the six official languages, with the addition of Portuguese and Kiswahili, as well as in other languages where possible;

59. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue building partnerships with local, national and regional broadcasters to extend the United Nations message to all corners of the world in an accurate and impartial way, and requests the News and Media Division to continue to take full advantage of the technological infrastructure made available in recent years;

United Nations website

60. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations website is an essential tool for the media, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, Member States and the general public and, in this regard, reiterates the continued need for strengthened efforts by the Department of Public Information to maintain and improve it;

61. *Recognizes* the efforts made by the Department of Public Information to implement the basic accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities to access the United Nations website, and calls upon the Department to continue to work towards compliance with accessibility requirements on all new and updated pages of the website, with the aim of ensuring its accessibility for persons with different kinds of disabilities;

62. *Notes* that the multilingual development and enrichment of the United Nations website has improved, and in this regard requests the Department of Public Information, in coordination with and with the support of content-providing offices of the Secretariat, to further improve the actions taken to achieve full parity among the six official languages on the United Nations website, and especially reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to ensure the adequate distribution of financial and human resources within the Department allocated to the United Nations website

among all official languages, taking into consideration the specificity of each official language;

63. *Recognizes* the cooperative arrangements undertaken by the Department of Public Information with academic institutions to increase the number of web pages available in some official languages, and reiterates its urgent request to the Secretary-General to extend those arrangements to all the official languages of the United Nations;

64. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, as from the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, to provide on the United Nations website, in all of the official languages of the United Nations, live webcasts and video archives of open, formal meetings of the General Assembly and of the Security Council with interpretation services, with a view to expanding the coverage to all open, formal United Nations meetings with interpretation services;

65. *Reiterates* its request that all content-providing offices of the Secretariat translate all English-language materials and databases posted on the United Nations website into all other official languages and make them available on the respective language websites in the most practical, efficient and cost-effective manner;

66. *Reaffirms* the need to enhance the technological infrastructure of the Department of Public Information on a continuous basis in order to widen the outreach of the Department and to continue to improve the United Nations website in a cost-neutral manner;

67. *Recognizes* that some official languages use non-Latin and bidirectional scripts and that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations are based on Latin script, which leads to difficulties in processing non-Latin and bidirectional scripts, and urges the Office of Information and Communications Technology to further collaborate with the Department of Public Information and to continue its efforts to ensure that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations fully support Latin, non-Latin and bidirectional scripts in order to enhance the equality of all official languages on the United Nations website;

68. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee of Information at its thirty-sixth session on the structure of the Organization's presence in social networks and its strategy and guidelines for their use;

V
Library services

69. *Welcomes* the completion of an inventory of 67 years of United Nations audiovisual history, and recognizing the importance of the audiovisual archives of the United Nations, stresses the urgency of digitization in order to prevent further deterioration of these unique historical archives and encourages the Department of Public Information to prioritize the development of collaborative arrangements for the digitization of these archives in a cost-neutral manner and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session;

70. *Requests*, in that context, that the Department of Public Information implement the recommendations of its working group on library improvement;

71. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to lead the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries, and further commends the steps taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the other member libraries of the Steering Committee to align their activities, services and outputs more closely with the goals, objectives and operational priorities of the Organization;

72. *Reiterates* the need to maintain a multilingual collection of books, periodicals and other materials in hard copy, accessible to Member States and others, as specified in paragraph 75 of the present resolution, ensuring that the Library continues to be a broadly accessible resource for information about the United Nations and its activities;

73. *Notes* the efforts made by the Department of Public Information and other stakeholders to plan, procure, implement, test and deploy a media assets management system solution for file-based production and for the management of the United Nations multimedia digital archives, calls upon the Department to explore alternative and feasible solutions for the digitization, preservation, quality assurance and technical processing of the audiovisual archive materials based on international standards and best practices, including in the context of the construction work of the capital master plan within the overall budget of the plan, and encourages the Department to seek the support of public and private institutions for its work in digitizing, storing and managing these archives and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session;

74. *Also notes* the initiative taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in its capacity as the focal point, to expand the scope of the regional training and knowledge-sharing workshops organized for the depository libraries in developing countries to include outreach in their activities;

75. *Acknowledges* the role of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in enhancing knowledge-sharing and networking activities to ensure access to the vast store of United Nations knowledge for delegates, permanent missions of Member States, the Secretariat, researchers and depository libraries worldwide;

76. *Notes* the efforts of the iSeek team, through the intranet, to raise awareness among staff members of new initiatives and developments in different departments of the Secretariat, and requests the Department of Public Information to work out a strategy for Member States to also benefit from these new developments;

VI
Outreach services

77. *Takes note* of the letter dated 30 April 2012 from the Senior Public Information and Liaison Officer of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to the Chair of the Committee on Information,[15] and encourages the United Nations Academic Impact to take effective steps to facilitate exchanges between the United Nations and institutions of higher education in all regions to support the common principles and goals of the United Nations, while

[15] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/67/21), annex.

recognizing the role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and its constitution;

78. *Acknowledges* that the outreach services provided by the Department of Public Information continue to work towards promoting awareness of the role and work of the United Nations;

79. *Welcomes* the educational outreach activities of the Department of Public Information, through the Global Teaching and Learning Project, to reach educators and young people worldwide through a range of multimedia platforms;

80. *Notes* the importance of the continued implementation by the Department of Public Information of the ongoing Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists' Fellowship Programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as mandated by the General Assembly, and requests the Department to consider how best to maximize the benefits derived from the programme by extending, inter alia, its duration and the number of its participants;

81. *Welcomes* the movement towards educational outreach and the orientation of the *UN Chronicle*, both print and online editions, and, to this end encourages the *UN Chronicle* to continue to develop co-publishing partnerships, collaborative educational activities and events with civil society organizations and institutions of higher learning;

82. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue the publication of the *UN Chronicle* with a view to improving it further in a cost-neutral manner and to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session on progress in this matter, and reiterates its request to submit options for publishing the *UN Chronicle* in all six official languages;

83. *Notes* the efforts undertaken by the Department of Public Information in organizing exhibitions on important United Nations-related issues, within existing mandates, at United Nations Headquarters and at other United Nations offices as a useful tool for reaching out to the general public, reaffirms the important role that guided tours play as a means of reaching out to the general public, and requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure that the guided tours provided at United Nations Headquarters and other United Nations duty stations are consistently available, in accordance with their income-generating nature, in particular in all the United Nations official languages;

84. *Also notes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to strengthen its role as a focal point for two-way interaction with civil society relating to the priorities and concerns of the Organization identified by Member States, and further notes in this regard the increasing involvement of civil society in United Nations activities, including the outreach activities directed at youth representatives and young journalists;

85. *Recalls* its resolution 41/68 D of 3 December 1986, commends the World Federation of United Nations Associations and its more than 100 national United Nations associations for the valuable contributions they have made during the past 67 years through their global activities in the mobilization of popular support for the United Nations, and calls for continued collaboration between the World Federation

and the Department of Public Information in support of their complementary objectives;

86. *Commends*, in a spirit of cooperation, the United Nations Correspondents Association for its ongoing activities and for its Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund, which sponsors journalists from developing countries to come to United Nations Headquarters and report on the activities during the General Assembly, and further encourages the international community to continue its financial support for the Fund;

87. *Expresses* its appreciation for the efforts and contribution of United Nations Messengers of Peace, Goodwill Ambassadors and other advocates to promote the work of the United Nations and to enhance international public awareness of its priorities and concerns, and calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to involve them in its communications and media strategies and outreach activities;

VII
Final remarks

88. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of all recommendations and requests contained in the present resolution;

89. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure that the level of services provided by the Department of Public Information is maintained throughout the period of the implementation of the capital master plan;

90. *Notes* the initiative taken by the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Department of Safety and Security and the Protocol and Liaison Service of the Secretariat, during the annual general debate of the General Assembly, to issue special identification stickers to press officers of Member States to enable them to escort media covering the visits of high-level officials to restricted areas, and strongly urges the Secretary-General to continue to improve this practice by acceding to the request by Member States to provide the needed number of additional passes to press officers of Member States to allow their access to all areas that are deemed restricted, in order to effectively and comprehensively report on high-level meetings that include officials of delegations of Member States;

91. *Requests* the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session;

92. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-ninth session the item entitled "Questions relating to information".

13-33922 (E) 140613